

**Notes:**

1. Stanza 8a is not part of Lama Tsongkhapa's original text, but has been added here following Pabongkha Rinpoche's outline.
2. Unification of appearance, dependent arising and emptiness.

**Colophons:**

*Three Principal Aspects of the Path:* These teachings by the virtue beggar [ge-long] Losang Drakpa, who has extensive listening, were composed as advice for the nephew of Ponpo Ngawang Drakpa.

It was translated into English by the beggar of food and sleep named Lama Zopa, with the editorial assistance of the devoted Jonathan Landaw, in November, 2006 at Kachoe Dechen Ling, Aptos, California. This translation was undertaken with the intention of producing an English version that would include all the words contained in the original Tibetan, a number of which were omitted from some translations previously available. It is hoped that the present work will enable more people to receive benefit from Lama Tsongkhapa's precious teachings.

Verses 11 and 12 were revised by Lama Zopa Rinpoche at Kopan Monastery in late 2006, and the revisions were made in this publication in February 2007 by Gyalten Mindrol, FPMT Education Department.

**Translator's Dedication:**

From the merits collected by doing this work, transmitting Lama Tsongkhapa's pure teaching — the heart of the 84,000 teachings of Buddha — into a western language, in a way as close as possible to the words and the meaning of the root text.

May this be most beneficial for all sentient beings, bringing kind mother sentient beings — whose lives are lost, under the control of karma and delusion, totally enveloped in the darkness of ignorance — to the achievement of enlightenment as quickly as possible.

May anyone who merely sees this text, reads this text, teaches this text, hears about this text, or keeps this text thereby actualize indestructible guru devotion, seeing the Guru as Buddha, and train well in the three common principles of the path, actualize the two stages, and achieve the unified state of Vajradhara as soon as possible. May he or she especially generate loving kindness, the compassionate thought, and bodhichitta and immediately become a source of peace and happiness for all sentient beings, especially in this world, and may all war, famine, disease, sickness, epidemics, torture, poverty, and the dangers of fire,

**Appendix I****Short Request to the  
Lineage Lamas*****The Root Guru***

Magnificent and precious root Guru,  
Please abide on the lotus seat on my crown.  
Guide me with your great kindness  
And grant me every realization of your body, speech, and mind.

***Guru Shakyamuni Buddha***

Holy body created by ten million excellent virtues,  
Holy speech fulfilling the hopes of infinite migratory beings,  
Holy mind seeing existence as it is,  
To the principal of the Shakyas, I make requests.

***Maitreya and Manjushri***

Supreme heirs of the unequalled teacher [the Buddha],  
Having assumed the burden of all the Conqueror's deeds,  
Emanating in innumerable Buddha-realms.  
To Ajita [Maitreya] and Manjughosha, I make requests.

***Nagarjuna, Asanga and all the great Indian pandits***

Thoroughly renowned throughout the three levels,  
Ornaments of Jambudvipa who wrote exact commentaries on  
the intent

Of the Mother of Conquerors, so difficult to fathom,  
At the feet of Nagarjuna and Asanga, I make requests.

### *Lama Atisha and the Lamas of the Kadam Tradition*

Bearer of the treasury of instructions  
That comprise the key points, unmistaken and complete,  
Of the paths of the profound view and vast deeds,  
Transmitted well from those two great trailblazers,  
To Dipamkara [Atisha], I make requests.

### *Lama Tsongkhapa, His Two Disciples, and the Lamas of the New Kadam Tradition*

Tsongkhapa, trailblazer of spiritual doctrine in the land of snows,  
Gyaltsab Je, the lord of reasoning on emptiness,  
Khedrup Je, the keeper of the teachings on sutra and tantra,  
To the lineage of father and sons, I make requests.

### *His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche*

To (Kyabje Yongdzin Trijang Rinpoche), Losang Yeshe, you are the  
first among the upholders of the Buddha's stainless teachings.  
You unify the wisdom of Je Tsongkhapa and the buddhas, and you  
emanate and safeguard mandala oceans without limit.  
At your feet, most precious Guru, I now make this request:  
Send forth to me waves of inspiring strength.

### *His Holiness the Dalai Lama*

Noble heart with all the wisdom of the Conqueror,  
Principal embodiment of all the stainless teachings of the  
conquerors -  
Protector emanated from an ocean of infinite mandalas,  
To you, kind Guru Ngawang Losang (Tenzin Gyatso), I make  
requests.

Please bless me with the potential to train in this way.

*[This is the common path of the being of higher capacity.]*

Having trained like this in the common path,  
I myself will not have aversion to experiencing  
The sufferings of cyclic existence for a long time,  
But by the force of extraordinary unbearable compassion for sen-  
tient beings,  
May I enter the quick path of the Vajrayana.  
By observing purely my vows and pledges even at the cost of my  
life,  
May I quickly attain the unified state of Vajradhara  
In one brief lifetime of this degenerate age.  
Please bless me with the potential to attain this.

*[This is the secret mantra vajra vehicle of the being of highest capacity.]*

See all the actions of my Guru as excellent,  
 And fulfill whatever he advises.  
 Please bless me with the potential to accomplish this.  
*[This is relying on the spiritual friend.]*

Knowing that this highly meaningful perfect human rebirth  
 Is difficult to obtain and easily lost,  
 Realizing the profundity of cause and effect  
 And the unbearable sufferings of the lower realms,  
 From my heart I take refuge in the three precious sublime ones,  
 Abandon negativity, and practice virtue in accordance with the  
     Dharma.  
 Please bless me with the potential to accomplish this.  
*[This is the path of the being of lower capacity.]*

In dependence on this, I am able to attain  
 Only the higher rebirths of humans and gods.  
 Not having abandoned afflictions,  
 I have to experience uninterrupted, limitless cyclic existence.  
 By contemplating well how cyclic existence works,  
 May I train day and night in the principal path  
 Of the three precious higher trainings –  
 The means of attaining liberation.  
 Please bless me with the potential to always train like this.  
*[This is the path of the being of middle capacity.]*

In dependence on this, I am able to attain only self-liberation.  
 As there is not one sentient being in all the six realms  
 Who has not been my mother or father,  
 I will turn away from this lower happiness  
 And generate the wish to fulfill their ultimate purposes.  
 By contemplating the path of equalizing and exchanging self for  
     others,  
 I will generate the precious bodhichitta  
 And engage in the bodhisattvas' actions of the six perfections.

### *Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche*

I make requests to you, Thubten Zopa.  
 With your strong shoulders of learning and practice  
 You patiently establish in all directions the stainless banner of  
 The Muni's teachings, especially the teachings of Lama Tsongkhapa.

### *Request to All Spiritual Friends*

Eyes to view all the vast teachings,  
 Supreme gateway to liberation for the fortunate,  
 Using skillful means to lovingly subdue:  
 To the illuminating spiritual friends, I make requests.

May I not arise heresy for even a second,  
 About the actions of the glorious Guru  
 May I regard whatever actions are done as pure  
 With this devotion, may I receive the Guru's blessings in my heart.

---

If you are practicing **Lama Chöpa Jorchö**, return to p. 116.

If you are performing the **Prayers for Teaching Occasions**, turn to  
 p. 199.

---

### *The Particular Special Quality of the Prasangika View*

[13] Furthermore, appearance eliminates the extreme of existence  
 And emptiness eliminates the extreme of non-existence.  
 If you realize how emptiness manifests in the manner of cause and effect  
 Then you are not captivated by wrong notions holding extreme views.

### *Having Gained Definite Ascertainment, Advice on Pursuing the Practice*

[14] In this way you realize exactly  
 The vital points of the three principal aspects of the path.  
 Resort to seeking solitude, generate the power of effort,  
 And quickly accomplish your final goal, my child.

### *A Glance Meditation on All the Important Points of the Lam-Rim*

Nature that embodies all the buddhas,  
 Source of all the pure transmission and realization Dharma,  
 Principal amongst all the arya Sangha:  
 I take refuge in all magnificent pure gurus.

Please bless my mind to become Dharma,  
 That Dharma to become the path,  
 And that path to be free of all hindrances.  
 Until I achieve enlightenment, may I,  
 Just like the bodhisattvas, Shönnu Norsang and Taktungu,  
 Practice pure devotion to my Guru in thought and action,

### *The Reason to Meditate on the Right View*

- [9] Without the wisdom realizing ultimate reality,  
 Even though you have generated renunciation and the mind  
 of enlightenment  
 You cannot cut the root cause of circling.  
 Therefore, attempt the method to realize dependent arising.

### *Showing the Right View*

- [10] One who sees the cause and effect of all phenomena  
 Of both cyclic existence and the state beyond sorrow as for-  
 ever unbetraying,  
 And for whom any object trusted in by the grasping mind has  
 completely disappeared,  
 Has at that time entered the path pleasing the Buddhas.

### *The Definition of Not Having Completed the Analysis of the Right View*

- [11] If the appearance of dependent relation,  
 Which is unbetraying, is accepted separately from  
 emptiness,  
 And as long as they are seen as separate,  
 Then one has still not realized the Buddha's intent.

### *The Definition of Having Completed the Analysis of Right View*

- [12] If [these two realizations] are happening simultaneously with-  
 out alternation,  
 And from merely seeing dependent relation as completely  
 unbetraying  
 The definite ascertainment comes that completely destroys  
 The way all objects are apprehended [as truly existent],  
 At that time the analysis of the ultimate view is complete.

## Appendix 2

# Lam-Rim Prayers

---

Calling the Guru from Afar is on p. 263.

Foundation of All Good Qualities is on p. 199.

Three Principles of the Path is below.

Practicing Guru Devotion with the Nine Attitudes is on p. 141.

A Glance Meditation on All the Important Points of the Lam-rim is  
 on p. 341.

---

### *The Three Principles of the Path*

#### *Expressing the Homage*

I bow down to my perfect gurus.

#### *The Promise to Compose*

- [1] The essential meaning of the Victorious Ones' teachings,  
 The path praised by all the holy Victors and their Children,  
 The gateway of the fortunate ones desiring liberation –  
 This I shall try to explain as much as I can.

#### *Persuading to Listen*

- [2] Those who are not attached to the pleasures of circling  
 [samsara],  
 Who strive to make freedom and endowments meaningful,

Who entrust themselves to the path pleasing the Victorious Ones –  
You fortunate ones: listen with a calm mind.

### *The Purpose of Generating Renunciation*

- [3] Without the complete intention definitely to be free from circling,  
There is no way to pacify attachment seeking pleasurable effects in the ocean of circling.  
Also, by craving for cyclic existence, embodied beings are continuously bound.  
Therefore, at the very beginning seek renunciation.

### *How to Generate Renunciation*

- [4] Freedom and endowments are difficult to find  
And life has no time to spare.  
By gaining familiarity with this,  
Attraction to the appearances of this life is reversed.
- By thinking over and over again  
That actions and their effects are unbetraying,  
And repeatedly contemplating the miseries of cyclic existence,  
Attraction to the appearances of future lives is reversed.

### *The Definition of Having Generated Renunciation*

- [5] When, by having trained in that way,  
There is no arising, even for a second,  
Of attraction to the perfections of cyclic existence,  
And all day and night the intention seeking liberation arises –  
Then the thought of renunciation has been generated.

### *The Purpose of Generating the Mind of Enlightenment*

- [6] Even if renunciation has been developed,  
If it is not possessed by the mind of enlightenment  
It does not become the cause of the perfect bliss of unsurpassed enlightenment.  
Therefore the wise generate the supreme mind of enlightenment.

### *How to Generate the Mind of Enlightenment*

- [7] Swept away by the current of the four powerful rivers,  
Tied by the tight bonds of karma, so hard to undo,  
Caught in the iron net of self-grasping,  
Completely enveloped by the total darkness of ignorance,
- [8] Endlessly reborn in cyclic existence,  
Ceaselessly tormented by the three sufferings –  
Thinking that all mothers are in such a condition,  
Generate the supreme mind of enlightenment.

### *The Definition of Having Generated the Mind of Enlightenment*

- [8a]<sup>1</sup> In short,  
If like the mother whose cherished son has fallen into a pit of fire  
And who experiences even one second of his suffering as an unbearable eternity,  
Your reflection on the suffering of all mother sentient beings  
Has made it impossible for you to bear their suffering for even one second  
And the wish seeking enlightenment for their sake arises without effort,  
Then you have realized the supreme precious mind of enlightenment.